COMMONWEALTH *of VIRGINIA*
Virginia Wireless E-911 Services Board

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Grant Guidelines
for
Virginia Wireless E-911 Services Board's
PSAP Grant Program
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Virginia Wireless E-911 Services Board's PSAP Grant Program

I. Executive Summary

The PSAP Grant Program is a multi-million dollar grant program administered by the Virginia Wireless E-911 Services Board. The primary purpose of this program is to financially assist Virginia primary PSAPs with the purchase of equipment and services that support the continuity and enhancement of wireless E-911. Any Virginia primary PSAP that supports wireless E-911 is eligible to apply for and receive these funds either as a stand alone applicant or as part of a regional initiative. Grant awards can not exceed $150,000 for an individual primary PSAP or $300,000 for a regional initiative.

The deadline to apply for a grant each year is September 30th, unless an alternate date is established by the Board. Primary PSAPs need to submit their requests using the online automated application on VITA's Public Safety Communication's website. Successful applicants will have a twelve month grant period in which to expend their grant awards. This grant period will run consistent with the Commonwealth's fiscal year. However, since this is an annual grant program, this program cannot guarantee grant funding to sustain multi-year projects.

The chairperson of the Board will make appointments to the PSAP Grant Program's Grant Committee. Each year, in anticipation of the upcoming grant cycle, the Grant Committee will recommend to the Board the grant funding priorities, as well as any changes to the existing grant guidelines or administration of the grant program. The final authority to administer the PSAP Grant Program rests with the Board, and without prior notice, the Board can amend, alter, or change the guidelines.

Primary PSAPs have two programs through which to apply for grant funds. These programs are the Wireless E-911 Equipment and Services Continuity Program and the Wireless E-911 Enhancement Program. The purpose of the Continuity Program is to provide funding to primary PSAPs for projects designed to replace or upgrade wireless E-911 equipment and services that are technically outdated, without vendor support, or can no longer perform at an established minimum functional standard to sustain an acceptable level of service to the public. Each year, this program will receive no less than 80% of the available funds in the PSAP Grant Program. The purpose of the Enhancement Program is to provide funding to primary PSAPs for projects designed to enhance cross-jurisdictional information sharing and collaboration among PSAPs, PSAP staff development, and new capabilities beyond those currently available with wireless E-911. Each year, this program will receive the remaining percentage of the available funds in the PSAP Grant Program

All applications submitted by primary PSAPs for these grant programs must include a statement of need, a project description, a budget, a budget narrative, and an evaluation plan. Awards will be made by the Board based on the substance of the application relative to the established funding priorities.

II. Introduction

What is the PSAP Grant Program?

The PSAP Grant Program is a multi-million dollar grant program for Virginia primary PSAPs to provide financial assistance to these organizations based on demonstrated need. Funding for this program is being made available through the Virginia Wireless E-911 Services Board (the "Board") to support wireless E-911. The primary goal of this program is to financially assist primary PSAPs with the purchase of equipment and services that support the continuity and enhancement of wireless E-911.

This PSAP Grant Program has been established in §56-484.17 of the Code of Virginia.

Wireless E-911 Fund; uses of Fund; enforcement; audit required:

> *The remaining 10% and any remaining funds from the previous fiscal year from the 30% for the CMRS providers shall be distributed to the PSAPs or on behalf of PSAPs based on grant requests received by the Board each fiscal year. The Board shall establish criteria for receiving and making grants from the Fund, including procedures for determining the amount of a grant and payment schedule: however, the grants must be to the benefit of wireless E-911. Any grant funding that has not been committed by the Board by the end of the fiscal year shall be distributed to the PSAPs based on the same distribution percentage used during the fiscal year in which the funding was collected; however, the Board may retain some or all of this uncommitted funding for an identified funding need in the next fiscal year.*

In regards to the PSAP Grant Program, the Board is authorized to undertake the following actions:
1. Distribute 10% of the Wireless E-911 Fund collected during the current fiscal year as PSAP grants to support Wireless E-911.
2. Distribute any remaining funds from the 30% CMRS earmark collected during the previous fiscal year as PSAP grants to support wireless E-911.
3. Distribute to the PSAPs any uncommitted grant funding at the end of each fiscal year based on the same distribution percentage used during the fiscal year in which the funds were collected.
4. Retain any of the uncommitted grant or CMRS funding for an identified funding need in the upcoming fiscal year.

This document contains information about the rules and requirements governing the PSAP Grant Program, the types of projects eligible for funding, the grant application forms, and instructions for completing and submitting them. However, the final authority to administer this grant program rests with the Board. The Board can amend, alter, or change these guidelines.

Definitions

CMRS means mobile telecommunications services as defined in the federal Mobile Telecommunications Sourcing Act, 4 U.S.C. § 124, as amended.

CMRS provider - means an entity authorized by the Federal Communications Commission to provide CMRS within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Memorandum of understanding (MOU) – means a formal document that guides and directs the parties of a regional project in regards to their affiliation and working relationship, inclusive of anticipated future arrangements, for the purposes outlined in the grant application submitted by the parties.

Primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) – means a facility equipped and staffed on a 24-hour basis to receive and process wireless E-911 calls or that intends to receive and process wireless E-911 calls and has notified CMRS providers in its jurisdiction of its intention to receive and process such calls.

Regional Initiative - means a project or projects involving multiple primary PSAPS that represent no less than two cities, two counties, or a combination of at least one city and one county. A regional initiative can also mean a single primary PSAP that serves multiple counties or cities or a project involving the consolidation of two or more primary PSAPs. Consolidation, as it relates to regional initiatives is interpreted broadly. It can range from the consolidation of components that support wireless E-911, such as shared equipment, shared resources, and the co-location of technology applications and infrastructure to the physical merger and combined management of separate PSAPs. All participants must benefit directly from the activities implemented with the grant award.

Wireless E-911 Fund - means a dedicated fund consisting of all moneys collected pursuant to the Wireless E-911 surcharge, as well as any additional funds otherwise allocated or donated to the Wireless E-911 Fund.

Wireless E-911 surcharge means a monthly fee of $.75 billed by each CMRS provider and CMRS reseller on each CMRS number of a customer with a place of primary use in Virginia.

Eligibility

Any Virginia primary PSAP that supports wireless E-911 is eligible to apply for and receive these funds. Additional consideration will be given to new primary PSAP projects that are not currently being supported by a local, state or federal grant and to primary PSAPs that can demonstrate financial need.

Amount Available and Match Requirement

A primary PSAP can submit no more than one funding request as an individual PSAP and participate in no more than one regional initiative in a grant cycle. As a result, a primary PSAP could be requesting funding in two separate applications during the same grant cycle.

In addition, funding requests from either a single primary PSAP or for a regional initiative can include multiple projects from different grant programmatic areas. Funding requests for more than one project in a single request will need to prioritize these projects. In the event that the Board exercises its discretion and recommends a partial or incomplete award, the Grant Committee will work with the primary PSAP listed on the grant application to determine an optimal solution.

The amount of an award can not exceed $150,000 for an individual primary PSAP or $300,000 for a regional initiative. Funding from the PSAP Grant Program may be used to pay for no more than 80% of the cost associated with approved projects. Grant recipients must provide the remaining 20% funding. The exceptions to the 20% required match are regional initiatives and individual primary PSAPS granted an exemption by the Board because they are not able to comply with the match requirement. However, individual primary PSAPs granted a waiver for the required match may be responsible for additional requirements with their grant awards.

Grant Period

The grant period for successful applicants will be for twelve months and this twelve month grant award period will run consistent with the Commonwealth's fiscal year. The Commonwealth's fiscal year begins on July 1st and ends on June 30th.

Multi-Year Funding

This is an annual grant program. Therefore, this program cannot guarantee grant funding to sustain multi-year projects. However, extensions to the grant period are permitted, if approved by the Board. PSAP Grant Program extensions will be handled in the same manner as other long-standing funding programs of the Board and are discussed in the Grant Cycle section.

How to Apply/Deadline

The entire grant application package is accessible from VITA's Public Safety Communication's website (www.va911.org). This automated application has been designed with built-in "help screens" and "drop-down menus" to assist primary PSAPs with the application process. The application can be saved and retrieved as many times as needed during completion.

The automated system will not accept incomplete applications and will alert a primary PSAP if required information is missing. **However, once an application has been submitted, it cannot be changed without prior approval of PSC staff.** After submission, an automatic e-mail notification will be sent to the individual listed on the grant application as the primary PSAP's Project Director to acknowledge that the application has been received.

All funding requests must be submitted online using the automated application on VITA's Public Safety Communication's website. In addition to the online help, technical assistance is available from VITA's Public Safety Communications (PSC) staff throughout the grant process. The deadline to apply each year is September 30th, unless an alternate date is established by the Board.

III. Funding Guidelines

Grant Committee

The chairperson of the Board will make appointments to the Grant Committee for the PSAP Grant Program. Membership to the Grant Committee will be staggered. Committee appointments will be made for either a two - or three - year term. Committee members are appointed and serve at the pleasure of the Board's chairperson. At all times, the Grant Committee should have at least two Board members.

Furthermore, members of the Grant Committee should adequately represent the geographic diversity of the Commonwealth, the varied operational capacities of Virginia primary PSAPs, and public safety professional organizations. This can be accomplished with a nine-person Grant Committee consisting of the following individuals: 2 Board members (one of which will chair the committee), 4 primary PSAP representatives (two of which will represent APCO and NENA), and 3 at-large members.

Each year, in anticipation of the upcoming grant cycle, the Grant Committee will recommend the grant funding priorities for the continuity and enhancement of wireless E-911 equipment and services to the Board. Also in anticipation of the upcoming grant cycle, the Grant Committee will make recommendations to the Board regarding the creation and/or modification of previously established program guidelines, the development of any criteria for awarding grants, and the proposal of any necessary changes to the administration of the PSAP Grant Program.

Grant Cycle

The Board will accept primary PSAP grant applications each year from the beginning of the grant application period until September 30th. The grant application period will be announced no later than July 1st each year. VITA's Public Safety Communications staff will review grant applications for completeness and accuracy and forward applications to the Grant Committee. Applications will be reviewed by the Grant Committee from

October 1st until December 31st. The Grant Committee will make funding recommendations to the Board. The Board will review and approve applications no later than February 15th to coincide with local budget planning cycles. Final approval is at the discretion of the Board. Primary PSAPs will receive an electronic grant award notification by March 1st. After the primary PSAPs receive their notification, the Grant Committee will provide the Board with its recommendations for funding priorities and changes to the grant guideline for the upcoming grant cycle no later than May 1st. Grant awards to the primary PSAPs will be made after July 1st.

Primary PSAPs receiving funding will be required to provide separate financial and programmatic reports to close out their grant no later than 13 months after receiving funding. These reports are part of the **Grant Reconciliation** form which is available through the online automated application. Primary PSAPs will use the programmatic report to demonstrate, with performance measures, that they have substantively and successfully completed their project. Also, primary PSAPs will use the financial report to demonstrate, by providing invoices, that they have expended grant funds.

Furthermore, if a primary PSAP has made a reasonable attempt to complete the project within the required time frame, but is unable to do so, an extension can be requested from the Board. In order to request an extension, the extension request block must be checked when submitting the Grant Reconciliation form. Once the Board approves the extension request, the required financial and programmatic reports must be completed by the primary PSAP within 30 days after the approved extension date.

Failure on the part of the primary PSAP to meet grant guidelines may result in the withholding of future grant funding. The Board shall audit the grant funding received by all recipients to ensure that it was utilized in accordance with the grant requirements. If it is determined that the funding was misused, then the Commonwealth can take appropriate action to the extent permitted by law.

Regional Initiatives

Any eligible primary PSAP may act as a "host applicant" in a funding request for a regional initiative. Regional initiatives require that one eligible primary PSAP act as the "host" for the initiative. The "host" will be the fiscal agent responsible for fulfilling all grant requirements such as reports, control of and accounting for funds, and distribution and control of equipment purchased with the grant award. All jurisdictions participating in a regional initiative must be identified in the **Grant Application** form. Letters of commitment and /or a joint MOU must be provided by all of the participating localities.

Regional initiatives among PSAPs are encouraged, but require additional information. In the grant application form the following items related to the regional initiatives should be addressed: the relationship of the initiative to the participating PSAPs, intended collaborative efforts, the geographic area that will be served by the initiative, resource sharing, and how the initiative impacts the operational or strategic plans of the participating agencies.

<u>*Statement of Need*</u>

Each funding request must include a **Statement of Need** that the project is attempting to address. This statement should reference the relationship to the current funding priorities established by the Grant Committee and include evidence of any financial need. Documentation of need should be established with facts and quantifiable data. In order to address the key elements related to need, the Statement of Need form on the online automated application has built-in question fields and corresponding text boxes for the primary PSAP to address the relationship of the following items to their projects: identification of funding priorities; impact on operational services; consequences of not receiving funding; inclusion of project in a long-term or a strategic plan; likelihood of completing project without grant funding; availability of other funding source for project; percentage of grant funding request to total project costs; and, local sustainability.

<u>*Project Development*</u>

The PSAP Grant Program encourages primary PSAP to formulate a thorough, concise, and complete grant proposal. Depending on the programmatic area selected, the grant guidelines permit the inclusion of a number of related "activities" to comprehensively address the needs of a locality or region, served by a primary PSAP, that are related to wireless E-911. Each programmatic area has its own set of funding priorities. This approach provides primary PSAPs with the opportunity to develop a more comprehensive funding request that addresses a broader range of needs.

The majority of grant awards will be made through the Wireless E-911 Equipment and Services Continuity Program to primary PSAPs for projects that support equipment or services for current wireless E-911 response needs. However, a small allocation of funding will be available through the Wireless E-911 Enhancement Program to primary PSAPs for projects that provide enhanced wireless E-911 capabilities.

<u>*Project Description and Methodology*</u>

Primary PSAPs seeking funding for their Wireless E-911 projects need to provide a thorough, concise, and complete description in the **Project Description** form. At a minimum, this description should outline goals and objectives, provide an implementation strategy and work plan, list the activities to be accomplished, include a timeline, and identify the longevity or sustainability of the project. The Project Description form on the online grant application has built-in question fields and corresponding text boxes for the primary PSAP to describe the items listed above.

In addition, depending on the programmatic area selected, primary PSAPs may be prompted to provide more information such as: the interface or compatibility between existing equipment and/or software and that which you intend to purchase; the overall relationship of your project to established long-range future technologies plans; and, how the equipment purchased will support future technologies for PSAP readiness. A

thorough explanation of required programmatic elements and sample text can be found in the instructions for online automated application.

Project Funding Plans

Each funding request must include a budget for the total amount requested. Using the **Budget** form, list the planned expenditures to be made with grant funds, including any required matching funds. If the funding request is for the Wireless E-911 Equipment and Services Continuity Program, a line item breakdown is not necessary. Instead, list the total cost of each project and provide the Grant Committee with a vendor prepared quote or cost schedule. If the funding request is for the Wireless E-911 Enhancement Program, provide line item breakdowns of project costs.

In addition to completing the Budget form, applicants must provide a corresponding narrative using the **Project Budget Narrative** form that briefly explains the reason for each requested budget item and provides the basis for its cost. All items requested must be thoroughly justified and clearly related to the proposed project.

If this project will have ongoing expenses, such as monthly recurring charges, describe plans and specific sources for future/long-term funding. Primary PSAPs should demonstrate how the project will be sustained in the future without additional outside funding.

Evaluation

Each proposal must include a completed **Evaluation** form that lists the performance measures to be used in determining whether or not a primary PSAP's project has successfully met the goals and objectives of each programmatic area. In order to simplify this process, and ensure the use of appropriate performance measures, built-in question fields and corresponding text boxes are included in the evaluation form on the online application.

For the Wireless E-911 Equipment and Services Continuity Program, primary PSAPs will need to demonstrate that the equipment or services listed on the grant application have been purchased, installed/implemented, and performing as expected. For the Wireless E-911 Enhancement Program, primary PSAPs will also need to identify the short-term, intermediate, and/or long-term outcomes, the measures used to determine outcomes, how data will be collected and evaluations conducted, and how data will be presented.

Review Process

The Grant Committee will rank all complete and eligible applications based on the substance of the application relative to the established funding priorities. As explained earlier, the funding priorities and the criteria for evaluating applications are established based on set priorities. Applications that best address the grant funding priorities will score higher than those applications that are not directed toward the priorities. In

addition to funding priorities, the Grant Committee will evaluate applications based on what is contained in the application, the relationship to wireless E-911, whether or not funding was received in the last grant cycle, sustainability, demonstrated financial need, and criticality, as well as other criteria developed by the Grant Committee and identified in conjunction with the announcement of the grant application period.

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WIRELESS E-911 EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES CONTINUITY PROGRAM

Purpose

The Board will provide funding to primary PSAPs for projects designed to replace or upgrade wireless E-911 equipment and services that are technically outdated, without vendor support, or can no longer perform at an established minimum functional standard to sustain an acceptable level of service to the public.

Funding Allocation

Each year, this program will receive no less than 80% of the available funds in the PSAP Grant Program.

Program Concept

Grant funds may be requested, but are not limited to, the following wireless E-911 equipment and services: customer premise equipment (CPE); mapping display systems and related GIS services; call accounting equipment; voice recorders and logging systems; integrated 911 call processing systems; and, internal network improvements that support wireless E-911 equipment and services.

Goals and Objectives

Primary PSAPs should submit funding requests for projects with goals and objectives relevant to the purchase of equipment and/or services that support the continuity of wireless E-911 and to the need described in the statement of need section of the application. Goals and objectives should be stated using quantifiable and measurable language that can easily be transformed into performance measures.

Implementation

Primary PSAPs need to describe in the project description section of the grant application the implementation steps and work plan developed for the purchase of equipment and/or services that support the continuity of wireless E-911. This narrative should include anticipated start and ending dates for milestones, activities directly related to the goals, and how the primary PSAP intends to sustain this purchase after the grant is completed.

Outcomes/Evaluation

Primary PSAPs should describe in the evaluation section of the grant application the specific outcomes they expect to result from the purchase of equipment and/or services that support the continuity of wireless E-911 and the measures that will be used to determine if the outcomes have been achieved.

WIRELESS E-911 ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Purpose

The Board will provide funds to primary PSAPs for projects designed to enhance cross-jurisdictional information sharing and collaboration among PSAPs, PSAP staff development, and new capabilities beyond those currently available with wireless E-911.

Funding Allocation

Each year, this program will receive the remaining percentage of the available funds in the PSAP Grant Program.

Program Concept

Grant funds may be requested, but are not limited to the following initiatives: recruitment, training, an retention of PSAP personnel; future technologies beneficial to wireless E-911; and disaster and redundancy planning and technology.

Goals and Objectives

Primary PSAPs should submit funding requests for projects with goals and objectives relevant to the purchase of equipment and/or services that support the enhancement of wireless E-911 and to the need described in the statement of need section of the application. Goals and objectives should be stated using quantifiable and measurable language that can easily be transformed into performance measures.

Implementation

Primary PSAPs need to describe in the project description section of the grant application the implementation steps and work plan developed for the purchase of equipment and/or services that support the enhancement of wireless E-911. This narrative should include anticipated start and ending dates for milestones, activities directly related to the goals, and how the primary PSAP intends to sustain this purchase after the grant is completed.

Outcomes/Evaluation

Primary PSAPs should describe in the evaluation section of the grant application the specific outcomes they expect to result from the purchase of equipment and/or services that support the enhancement of wireless E-911 and the measures that will be used to determine if the outcomes have been achieved.

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